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HOME LIFE IN MEXICO



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BY GABRIELA F. CASTILLO

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PREFACE

This is one of a series of pamphlets on Home Life, which taken together make up the fourth in the series of study materials dealing with various phases of life on our mission fields, namely: Education, Religious Life and Economic Life.

The other pamphlets in this series include Home Life in Kenya Colony, Cuba, Jamaica, Among the Indians in Oklahoma, Ramallah and Monroe County, Tennessee.

The purpose of this study is to assist Friends to become acquainted with the Home Life in Mexico and to show the influence of Christian training upon the family unit and its place in community life.

INTRODUCTION

Among the things which do not die, yet constantly change, we find the family. It seems different according to the national and racial background and the period.

The family presents itself to us as a human institution, regulated by customs and laws, exposed to human error and passions. By its external conditions it belongs to the domain of the ephemeral, but by its roots—love and the bonds of blood—it belongs to the domain of eternal things.

In this small piece of writing about Home Life in Mexico I have made an effort to emphasize the brighter aspects of my country, even though I do not try to conceal the dark points.

HOME LIFE IN MEXICO

MUSIC

Somebody rang the bell at my door and when I opened it, I had the greatest surprise of my life. My very dear friend, Grace, from Philadelphia, whom I had not seen for more than 25 years was there, with her sister Rhea. We have been in correspondence all these years. Her picture is in my living room and for some reason, though I had not seen her for such a long time and though she had not advised us of their coming to Mexico I knew she was Grace and she without hesitation called me Maria. We shook hands but that was not enough for me. I had to greet her in the Mexican way, so opening my arms I gave her an embrace and we kissed each other.

The first thing she told me was how hard it had been to find the street where I live. The streets in Mexico are not numbered like in many places in the States. Every street has the name of a national or foreign military hero, of an artist, national or foreign, of a special date like May 5, September 16, of an animal or an insect, and in many cases the same name is given to streets in different sections of the city of Mexico, like in the case of the name of the street where I live. No doubt she had trouble looking for me.

They had come to Mexico on a vacation and we wanted them to stay at our home. Grace wanted to see everything, to have news about everybody she had met 25 years ago. She remembered so many incidents of our life at that time that the hours went by and somebody had to tell us that it was after midnight, that the best thing to do was to go to bed, that we could continue our talk the following day. So we did, not only the next day, but the next two weeks which she spent in Mexico and its surroundings.

We remembered the day when Grace arrived at Mexico City as a young missionary and how, since then, we have been friends.

"I play yet the records of Mexican music we bought together one night. Let us go and buy some more," she said.

She was surprised to find so many new Mexican records, with melodies so soft and sweet, that it was hard for her to decide what to buy.

"Do you sing yet 'Las Mananitas' when it is the birthday of some one in the family, or of some of your friends?"

"Of course we do. I think you have only one version of those Mananitas, but there are two different tunes, and there are now some other songs appropriate for this occasion."

"I well remember," Grace said, "the day you and a group of girls from our Sunday school came to my window so early in the morning to sing those 'Mananitas' and some other of your popular songs."

"And we did not go as early as it is the custom. You know that three or four o'clock in the morning is not too early for those who go to sing."

"Another thing which I remember are those serenades that the lovers give to their girls under or near their barred windows."

"Yes, they do it oftener in the small towns, where three or more boys get together, some of them play the violin, the guitar or the mandolin and some of them sing the most romantic songs. They do it in the city also where they sometimes take even a piano in a truck, and they sometimes get paid singers and musicians to sing to their girls. They begin singing shortly after midnight, going from one house to another, and some times they do not finish until five or six o'clock in the morning. They sing not only to their girls, but to their mothers, or their wives on special occasions. Before you leave I am going to tell my boys to come with their friends and play and sing for you both."

"We will appreciate it so much," Rhea said, "ask them to do it, please."

"Yes, I am going to ask them to play and sing for you both versions of 'Las Mananitas' and some of our most recent popular, but beautiful songs."

"Surely that is going to help me in selecting my records"

Grace added. "I have always enjoyed your music and your songs. Some of them are very romantic, and I know that many of your songs have been handed down from one generation to another."

One of my boys invited them to go that night to the National Palace of Fine Arts, the most beautiful theatre in Latin America. A good Symphonic orchestra was to play. Grace was surprised to find the theatre completely filled.

"Our people like good music," my boy explained to her. "Here in Mexico City, in Monterrey, Puebla, and Guadalajara and in many other small towns, groups form bands and symphonies, and various foreign companies visit us giving performances of opera, ballet or concerts."

"Yes," Grace commented, "I have always felt that Mexico loves good music and poetry and painting. Many of your people are artists."

"Have you noticed the singing in our Evangelical Churches?" my other boy asked. "In the big and the small Protestant churches singing is one of the efficient ways of worshipping."

"I have heard," Rhea said, "that the evangelical people sing many hymns, music and letter, from the inspiration of Mexican preacher, Mexican young people, Mexican leaders and Mexican laymen, in addition to those translated from our own hymns."

"Yes, it is true. The musical culture of our Protestant members has awakened their interest in classical music, as well as popular and religious music. Every Protestant church has its choir. Two years ago a united interdenominational choir was formed and their performances are undoubtedly on the professional level," my older boy commented.

"We would like to attend that special service where all the choirs of the churches in Mexico City worship singing one hymn each," Rhea suggested.

"Sorry that they do it only once a year and they will not sing while you are here," one of the boys replied.

"Coming in our car through the National Highway, we stopped at Ciudad Victoria," Grace told us, "and we attended a service of the Friends Church. We were very much moved by the fervor with which forty people sing. It seemed as if more than one hundred were singing."

"Did you hear the Garcia girls singing?" one of the boys asked.

"Yes, they had a special number and they sing beautifully."

"They are the daughters of one of the first members of our church in that place."

MARRIAGE CUSTOMS

We decided to make plans for visiting some friends and places the following day. They wanted to see everything. Grace was surprised at the changes during the last 25 years. Rhea wanted to know if there were yet in force some laws and customs of our people, of which Grace had told them when she decided to come back to the States.

"Do you still have to marry first before a civil authority," Rhea asked.

"Yes, we have to do it. A marriage cannot be celebrated in a church unless the civil marriage has taken place first. There is a law which forbids ministers of any religion whatsoever to celebrate a religious marriage service if the contracting parties have not first been married by civil law."

"How is it that I find that some people are only married by the Catholic Church?" Grace commented.

"Well you know that in Mexico, like in all Latin American countries, the Roman Catholic Church is predominant and desires always to keep its place, disobeys the law, and so we find many people married only by the Catholic Church who never contracted civil matrimony. We also find many couples married only by civil law, without the religious marriage," I answered.

"Why are so many couples living together without being married by the civil or religious service?" Rhea inquired.

"When a man marries in Mexico," I told her, "he must pay

all the expenses involved: the house, the furniture, the household equipment, the bride's trousseau, even the dress worn for the wedding, the rings, the flowers, civil and church fees, the *fiesta*. Therefore in the large cities the young men must wait a long time before marrying, since they must save the money necessary or else marry by contracting debts, which will be a burden on the new home."

"What are the requirements to contract civil matrimony?" Grace asked.

"Our civil laws," one of the boys answered, "have not lost sight of the importance of the physical condition of those who wish to contract marriage, and with the purpose that the generations to come may be strong and sound, the laws require that those desiring to marry must present to the Clerk of the Civil Registry, along with the application for a license, a certificate of good health, drawn up by an accredited physician which states that the applicants are free from syphilis, tuberculosis, or any chronic incurable disease which may be contagious or hereditary."

"Are our Protestant churches in Mexico doing something to regularize the matrimonial life in the homes where the parents have never had either the civil or religious service, but have lived thus for many years?" Rhea asked.

"Yes," I replied, "this is one of the most encouraging enterprises of our evangelical churches, which is now being copied by the civil authorities. Our Protestant churches always insist that before these people are received as members, they must regularize their matrimonial life; thus one can see, at least once a year, the pastors accompanying several couples to the Registry Office and then in a special service celebrate the religious marriage service of couples who may have grown children."

"One thing that called my attention," Rhea added, "is to find many girls, among the Indians, some not older than 15 years, already being mothers."

"Mexican women usually marry young," one of the boys remarked.

"What is the legal minimum age for the man or woman wishing to marry?" Grace asked.

"Sixteen for the man, fourteen for the girl. However those who marry at this age must present the written consent of their parents or guardians," the young boy remarked. "Legal majority is set at the age of twenty-one for single men and women, eighteen for married."

"Alma, Luz' daughter, married recently. They said that the civil ceremony took place in the Civil Registry Office," Grace said.

"Yes," I answered, "but if the contracting parties have money enough this ceremony takes place in the home."

"Alma married in a religious service in our Church," my oldest boy added, "which is very similar to the ones celebrated in your Protestant churches in the States, but we try to omit everything that may resemble the Catholic Church, like the candles I have seen in some weddings in the States."

"Do you remember the special dinner we had at your wedding?" Grace said. "Rice, mole, beans, tortillas, refreshments, no wine, you were marrying a Quaker minister and both families were Christians."

"Yes, I remember everything. However the customs with which a marriage is celebrated vary according to the region and the means of the family, and their religion. Among the Indian groups of different parts of my country one finds curious customs, which attract the attention even of us people who live in the cities."

"I would like you to describe to me some you have seen," Rhea told us. "I would like to have some material for a talk to my Missionary Society."

"Well, here are three typical cases in the State of Mexico. It is the custom in some places for the priest or special representatives to make the request for the girl's hand, in this case the latter carry candles to the home of the girl, and if the parents permit these to be lighted, it is a sign that they approve the match, if not, it is equivalent to a formal negative. In other

places the arrangements for a betrothal, like those for the marriage, are made by letter. In some other places the groom's relatives commission the local priest and one other person to ask for the girl's hand, and the latter is not seen until the request is made a second time, when her parents accept the suitor; this is when the boy goes to the girl's house carrying various lengths of dress material so that she can prepare her trousseau."

A VISIT TO SOME HOMES

As planned before, we visited the homes of some of our friends in Mexico City and after those visits Grace and Rhea had the following comments.

Grace was surprised to find that even in the city of Mexico, where three million inhabitants of the twenty-five million population of the Republic live, there are so many contrasts. The homes range from those of one room to the large houses of the ever increasing group of millionaires.

We showed them the great apartment houses or housing units where we found houses identical in structure, size, exterior arrangement of rooms and yet some were different from others in a noticeable degree and one breathed in them a different air. Some houses were like the den of a wildboar, savage and forbidding; others were courteous and friendly, even for the guest of a day, for the stranger who passed that way.

"I liked the homes of many of our old friends," Grace commented, "because I felt myself surrounded as if by religious incense, and in some of them I felt the atmosphere of study."

It was hard or almost impossible to find some of the friends she wanted to see and I made this comment which I consider to be true:

"The majority of us who live in cities, in rented houses, move too frequently. What we have left of ourselves within the walls of the house we occupied is invisible for the new renters. We are told that we were born on such and such a street, but at times the street has lost its name or its numbers, the house has been torn down to make way for new buildings, and at times the district itself has disappeared."

"I noticed also," Rhea commented, "that the construction of the houses is different from the ones we have in the States and that in your own country the construction varies from North to South, from East to West."

"Yes," one of the boys said, "they vary in accord with the climate, the means and the culture of the owner. Did you notice in the Northern part of the Republic that the majority of the walls of the houses are made of 'adobe,' and the roofs are made of straw and palm leaves?"

"Yes," Grace added "and we have noticed in the Southern part of your country that the houses are made of brick, cement and that they have flat roofs."

"Unfortunately," the other boy commented, "we cannot close our eyes to the facts; in our Mexico we have extremely humble villages, hamlets that are dusty, dark, dry, whose houses are generally unhygienic, huts small, rickety, unattractive and rundown which animals and humans share."

"I have been very happy," Grace told us, "to find that the homes of our evangelical members, rich or poor, stand out for their cleanliness."

"For me," I said, "it is another of the outstanding enterprises of the work of the missionaries from the different Protestant denominations. They have pioneered in giving our girls a real education for life, thus producing efficient homemakers. Now our Government is making an effort to send teachers and cultural missions to many districts of our country, which were formerly difficult to cover but which are open now to economic development as distances have been shortened by highways; and electric lights have come to many towns. You will be surprised to find as leaders of these cultural missions many of the members of our churches."

"And speaking about your highways," Rhea said, "we are planning to go back to the States through the recently opened Pan-American Highway. The Laredo-Mexico Highway is in very good condition and we admired the beautiful scenery."

MEXICAN FOOD

"Rhea has noticed," Grace told us. "that you use some utensils for the preparation of your meals which we do not use in the States. Please explain to her the use of them."

"The houses of rich and poor alike have always some articles which are necessary for the preparation of Mexican foods. For example, we have the *metate*, a special smooth stone with three legs, on which one grinds with a roller of the same material, similar to a rolling pin. On this *metate* are ground corn, chile, tomatoes, spices, and all the seasonings necessary for Mexican dishes. *Molcajetes* are also used. They are made of a special stone by the natives, on which the same things are ground when a smaller quantity is needed. Earthenware pots and kettles are used, and each region takes pride in making these with regional differences, so that we can say immediately that the piece comes from Puebla, Oaxaca, Guadalajara. This difference consists probably in the kind of clay used and in the form and decoration. Our people are artistic by nature and even in these earthenware utensils they put something of their artistic soul."

"Your meals," Rhea said, "are very different from ours. They are spicy, some are really hot, and I have noticed that you spend much time in their preparation."

"Well, it is true in some ways. However in the big cities you can eat the same meals as in any other city of the world and you can find at present American food in many restaurants."

"I like very much some of your meals," Grace added, "like your tortillas, tamales, cooked rice, and even the mole if it is not too hot."

"Do you have a special recipe for your mole?" Rhea asked.

"It is prepared with different kinds of chile," I explained, "but the ingredients and the amount of chile are different in almost every region. Chile sauce is prepared also in different forms and is never missing from our meals."

"We like very much the sweets we bought in Puebla," Grace added.

"The sweets are also famous in accordance to the region,"

one of the boys remarked. "Because of the climate in which we live we always have fruit and it is not necessary to make provision in the homes for any special season of the year, but in spite of that fact we have many different kinds of candy, made in a different way from that of the States."

"What is that colored drink you serve sometimes as a refreshment at your home?" Rhea asked.

"It is made with a flower called Jamaica, a flower which grows in our fields, which our natives dry and then sell. When put in water this flower gives a red color, and the special flavor to the water. We have added sugar, ice and lemon juice. Some other times we add lime or orange juice," Eulalia explained.

"If possible I'd like to take some of those flowers with us to prepare some refreshments in some meeting of our Church."

ROLE OF WOMEN

One evening after visiting some of our friends Rhea made some remarks about the difference between the role played by women in the United States and Mexico. I had to agree with her that in Mexico the father is indisputably the chief authority of the Mexican home. Even when the wife and the children work the master of the home is the father.

"What happens when a son becomes of age?" she asked.

"The father concedes him certain independence; for a girl independence is gained only with marriage, but marriage is only a change of dependence, that of the father for that of the husband," I commented.

"When a father makes a decision, even though he commits an injustice, the mother and the children respect it," Grace remarked.

"Yes," I added, "nobody dares to discuss his decisions."

"The Mexican woman," I said, "is a home woman: daughter, wife, single or widow, the home is the beginning and the end of her existence. One fact which gives us an idea of the importance family life has in our country is the number of people who dedicate themselves to household tasks. A third of the population, almost all women, according to the latest

statistics, dedicate their time completely to the duties of their sex."

"However I have heard that more girls are seen in schools and universities," Grace said.

"Yes," the older boy commented, "during the last twenty or thirty years we have seen the breaking down of many of the barriers that have kept women from occupying their rightful place in society. It is also another of the most encouraging aspects of the evangelical missions, their efforts to improve the traditional place of women in the Republic of Mexico. Woman is becoming more a companion to her husband and not condemned to a place of inferiority."

"Would a Mexican woman claim her independence if she becomes self-supporting?" Rhea asked.

"The family relationship is so strong that she will never connect the idea of economic independence with the idea of family independence. The teacher, the nurse, the clerk, the factory worker will think of her work only as a solution for the economical problems of her family and not as a personal liberation," the younger boy said.

CHILDREN

"I have noticed also that normally the Mexican family has many children," Rhea said.

"Yes," one of the boys commented, "in the cities, according to statistics, the average family consists of five members. However, in the villages it is not unusual to find families with more than twenty members."

"I have read that your infant mortality is very high, is it?" Grace asked.

"It is with shame we confess," the older boy said, "that our country is included among those with the highest rate of infant mortality. However children are much better cared for now than some years ago. There are yet old ideas and cultural habits surviving from pre-Columbian and colonial times, where life is not guided by scientific principles, but by old traditions and conventional criteria."

"I remember," Grace said, "you wrote me once that when one of your boys was sick it was attributed to the 'evil eye,' which was caused by some persons having laughed at the child."

"Yes," I answered, "he was less than one year old, and I was living in a small town in the center of our Republic. There are yet many superstitions, witchcraft, ignorance. I remember that to cure the 'evil eye' they use various herbs, incense, passing an egg over the feverish body of the child. You can realize that it is not surprising that in many cases the patient dies, since the real cause of the sickness is not reached."

"Have the evangelical groups done something to improve this condition?" Rhea wanted to know.

"The evangelical missions have made an outstanding contribution to the upbuilding of Mexico through their work in favor of the girls of the city and of our small towns, and they have not overlooked the Indian woman. They have taught to all our women elementary hygiene and how to care for the home and children."

"We have evangelical hospitals in many of the principal cities, we have now a group of Christian doctors and nurses, though not in a large number yet, which are helping our people in many ways," one boy said.

"Is your Government interested in this work?" Grace asked.

"Yes," the older boy replied, "and the Government itself is interested in the improvement and health of our children. We have in Mexico City a Children's Hospital, which has all the equipment of the best hospitals of the world, where rich and poor are given equal care. I will take you tomorrow to visit it."

"You also wrote me some time ago, Maria, about the social work that is required for the candidate for the medical degree."

"When a student finishes his course," the older boy explained, "it is required that before he takes his professional examination, he must serve for at least six months in a place in the Republic of Mexico where there is no physician, with the purpose of combating ignorance in this field wherever possible."

I believe that much has been accomplished, and surely the coming census will reveal an improvement in many directions."

"I have seen many new buildings in the villages and the cities which you told me have been built for schools," Rhea said.

"One of the greatest problems of the present-day Mexico is the lack of schools. Every year, here in the capital, in the cities of the interior, in the country, thousands of children are deprived of the privilege of education not only through lack of buildings for school, but also because the human element, the teachers, cannot meet the demands of the enormous task involved in teaching just the alphabet to the great mass of our population," the younger boy said.

"It seems also," I added, "that parents are placing more emphasis on the education of their children. Parents as a general thing, both in the city and in the country, place more emphasis on the education of the son than of the daughter. Nevertheless, we now see many of our young women studying in the Universities, a condition which was not true twenty-five years ago."

"I remember," Grace said, "that you began to work when you were almost a girl, not more than fifteen years old."

"Yes," I replied. "There is a law now and the minimum age requirement for employment is sixteen years, but in the country the parents use their children in the farm work as soon as possible."

"Parents in the cities are required to send their children to the primary schools," one of the boys remarked. "We now have many kindergartens and secondary schools, there are also several schools for mentally-retarded children; but in the country much remains to be done."

Then the other boy added:

"Nevertheless, the Government has exerted itself to the setting up of rural schools in the villages, where instruction is given through the fourth grade of the primary schools. Even parents who do not know how to read are encouraged to attend the rural schools, as a means of fighting illiteracy. A recent

law requires that every man or woman who knows how to read and write must teach at least one other person to read and write.

FIESTAS

"Which are your principal fiestas?" Rhea asked.

One of the boys replied:

"Since our people are essentially Catholic, the principal fiestas are those of the saints' day, and so almost every day in different places it is necessary to honor some saint. The majority of our homes have an image of their patron saint which is the object of worship.

"I have also noticed those images in your taxis, busses and many of your stores," Grace said.

"The families also celebrate with fiestas (dinners, dances) the birthdays of the members, baptisms, and the blessing of the image of the saints," I said.

One of the boys added:

"At the baptisms the most intimate friends are made the godparents, and the godmother gives the child all the clothing which it will wear on the day of the baptism. The godfather pays for the ceremony and the parents give the dinner."

"Which are your principal amusements?" Grace asked.

"For amusements the young and old of the cities," one of the boys said, "have movies, theaters, baseball, basketball and football games. In the country teams of five, nine or eleven players are organized from the young people to give outdoor exhibitions."

"Unfortunately," I added, "these entertainments generally take place on Sunday."

"Would you like to attend a bull-fight?" one of the boys asked.

"No, we have so many other things to do that we will have no time for it. We have read something about it and we think we would not like it. Thank you, anyway."

THE MOST URGENT NEED

"What do you think is the most urgent need of your people?" Rhea asked.

"During almost four hundred years the Catholic Church has dominated the homes and the entire life of our people but it has not made men better. In my personal opinion," I said, "the most urgent need is to enable our people to live a Christian life. We, Protestants, the believers in a living Christ, in a church where He is the only head, with a gospel which is life, must bring Mexico to Christ.

"The present goal of the young evangelical people is 'Mexico for Christ in the present generation'," one of the boys said, "and we should do all we can to make it a reality."

The other boy added:

"The most urgent need of our people is to be enabled to live courageously. Many of our men and women are living as if spiritually and morally defeated. The Catholic religion brought to Mexico by the Spanish conquistadores has not been sufficient to raise the moral level in which the majority of our people live."

And with all the fire of his youth he said:

"The Roman Catholic religion will never improve Mexico, as it has never improved any country where it has been preached for centuries."

"Yet in spite of this painful picture," I remarked, "in spite of the deep spiritual failure, it is easily seen that an intimate, latent religious longing exists in the Mexican people, that there is a hunger and thirst for spiritual truths, that they wait expectantly for a power higher than that of a dead church and a dead Christ."

"So you all think that the efforts in favor of Foreign Missions in my country have not been in vain," Grace said.

"Let us take this opportunity," the boys said, "to give a testimony of gratitude to all the missionaries. When you go back to your country tell your people that their prayers, their contributions which have made possible the coming of missionaries to our own country, have sowed in our lives the seeds of faith, and love and inner peace."

"Tell them," I said, "that it has been a privilege to be

in touch with Friends missionaries like Miss Lee, Miss Pickett, Miss Hendrick, Miss Knight, the Parkers, the Roberts. By their example, more than by their words we learned the excellence of Christian charity, of service to others, of love and faith. I can only thank God and all of them and all of you because I have always faith in my hours of joy and in my hours of sorrow, in success and in failure."

"Yes," the older boy said, "perhaps as in the gospel parable, not all the seed sown will bring forth fruit, but these sowers went out to sow with joy and surely returned after their labor with even greater joy. This is the supreme happiness, the satisfaction of a task completed."

"Grace," said Rhea, "we must help others to live Christian lives. We can only be Christians and Friends as we show people Christ. Nothing is really ours until we pass it on."

"In my personal opinion," one of the boys added, "I believe that 'a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump' and I am sure that many of the improvements which can be seen among our people are due beyond any doubt to the quiet, silent, unselfish work of the missionaries, of our pastors, of our religious workers and our Protestant churches, who little by little, throughout seventy-five years, have worked for the education of our people and for their moral, material and spiritual uplift."

"Now," I added, "there are Christian men and women in many places who are giving a witness of their faith in the public schools, in the shops, in the offices, and who are a light in the midst of those among whom they live."

"You are right," Grace said, "we cannot divorce religion from the life of the home and from life itself, and that is why as Christians we have the duty and responsibility of reaching your people and my people with a religion which gives life."

"In order that our homes may be light, in order that the best may shine in them, it is necessary, imperative, that Jesus be the invisible Guest there, and for me there is no one like the mother to foster the religious spirit," I added.

"Let us make our homes Christian," Rhea insisted.

"Yes," I said, "we must insist that our Christian mothers, as well as the young men and women who are going to form their homes, must bring Christ into the home, that there our religion may not be a duty, but a light in our life, a grace which upholds our spirits."

"Let us be optimistic, mother," one of my boys said, "instead of complaining about the thousands of egotistic, vain homes, let us offer the example of our home as a loving family, united, with generous hearts."

"Nothing has helped me so much in the midst of the problems of difficulties of life," I said to them, "as the memory of the Christian homes I knew as a girl and young woman, and among them are included those of some of the missionaries and pastors of our churches."

My friends were ready to leave Mexico. Had we given them a good picture of our home life in Mexico? At least we tried.

CONCLUSION

To those of you who may read this pamphlet, I want to assure you that your labor, your prayers, your economic help have not been in vain. I love Mexico, I believe in Mexico and I know that only Christ can transform our Mexico into a truly happy country, where virtue, honor and justice will flourish in each heart, and peace, joy and a holy life be the visible fruit of their communion with the Divine Saviour.

When the gospel of light and love and peace reaches every Mexican, there will be none who cannot read, there will be none who are superstitious or unbelieving or fanatical.

As Christians we have a great responsibility. It is not only to send our children to Sunday school it is to live a Christian life. Only thus can we aspire to have better homes and a better Mexico or hope that our children will remember with love the homes that we formed for them, and that they in their turn will form Christian homes — happy homes.

Of the grace that we have received, let us give grace. Let us love as we have been loved, let us give, since we have received.

